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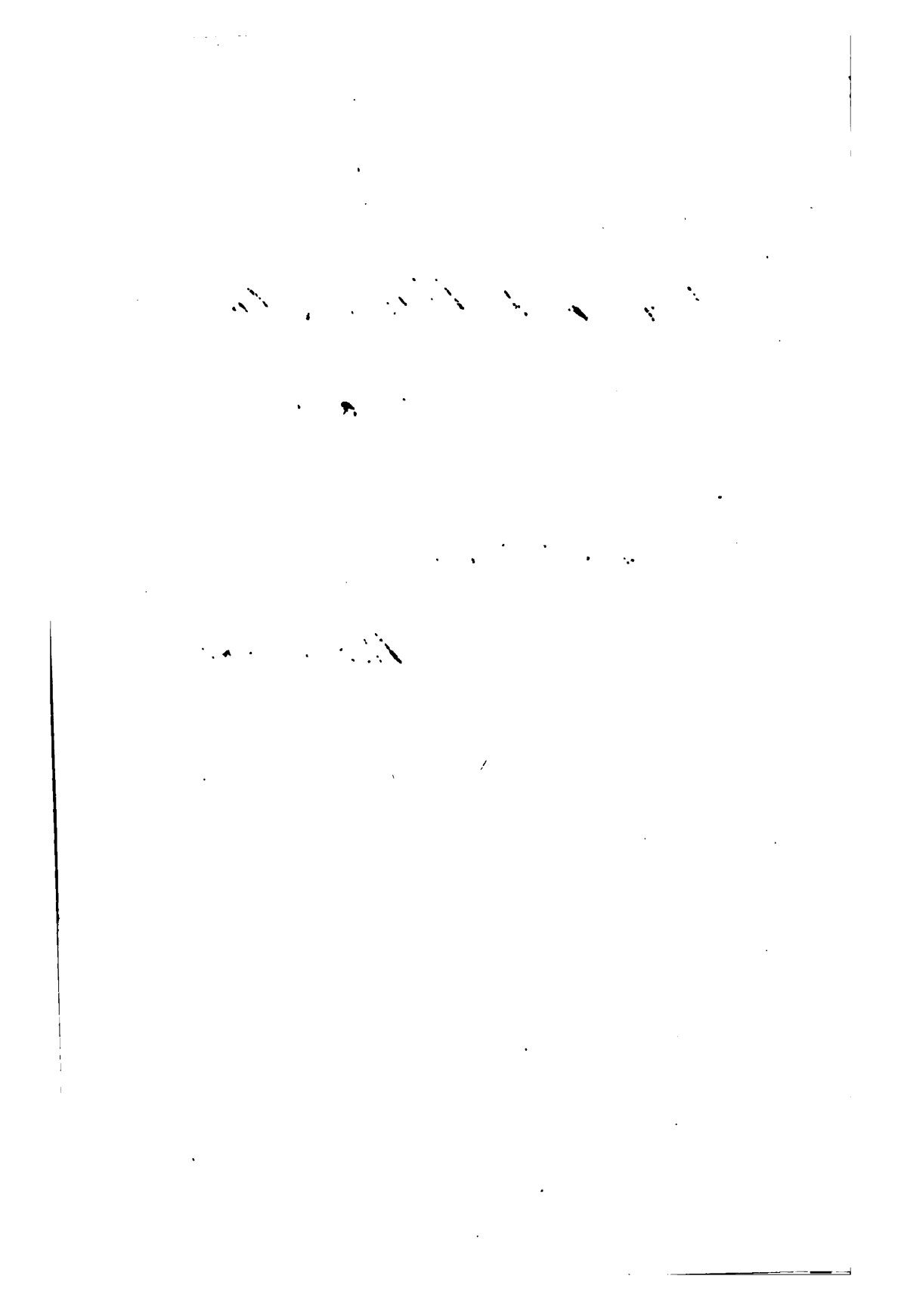

MEMORIAL

OF

EDWARD B. DALTON, M.D.

His love sincere, his thoughts immaculate;
His heart as far from fraud, as heaven from earth.

NEW YORK:

1872.

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1873. Jan. 4

MEMORIAL.

EDWARD BARRY DALTON, sixth child and fifth son of John C. Dalton, M.D., was born in Lowell, Massachusetts, September 21, 1834. In early youth his physical organization had an appearance of extreme delicacy, notwithstanding that, in bodily activity, endurance, and freedom from illness, he was fully equal to those of more robust external frame. The generous and companionable disposition, which was afterward so distinguishing a trait in his character, was noticeable even in childhood, and his intellectual superiority became abundantly manifest as soon as he commenced the more serious and practical studies of professional life.

He entered the Academic Department of Harvard University in 1851, and passed through the usual course with credit, taking parts in the Spring Exhibitions of his Junior and Senior years, and at Commencement at the time of his graduation in 1855. In the autumn of the same year he commenced the study of medicine under the direction of his father, and entered as a student in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York; passing his winters in attendance upon the lectures at the college, and continuing his studies in the intervals at Lowell, in

the office of his father, who was then engaged in active practice in that city. After following the regular course of study for three years, he received the degree of Doctor in Medicine at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in 1858; his graduating thesis being a treatise on "The Disorder known as Bronzed Skin, or Disease of the Supra-renal Capsules." The disease was at that time comparatively a new subject, having been first made known to the profession by Dr. Addison in 1855; and Dr. Dalton's thesis was marked by so much merit and originality that it was recommended for publication by the Faculty of the College.*

In March, 1858, he passed a successful competitive examination for the position of Interne at the Bellevue Hospital in New York, where he became in due time House Physician. He remained in this position until May, 1859, when he was appointed Resident Physician at St. Luke's Hospital, an institution then in the second year of its existence. He continued to discharge the duties of this post for nearly two years, until the commencement of his military life.

At the opening of the rebellion in 1861, he offered himself to the Medical Examining Board of the State of New York for the position of Regimental Surgeon, and was at once approved by them and placed upon the list of medical officers awaiting appointment. About the same time it was found that a surgeon was needed to serve upon the "Quaker City," a steamer of 1,500 tons burden,

* It appeared accordingly in the *New York Journal of Medicine* for May, 1860.

then recently chartered by the Union Defence Committee of New York, and afterward by the Navy Department of the United States, to cruise as a blockading gunboat off the capes of Virginia and the mouth of Chesapeake bay. Dr. Dalton was temporarily appointed to this post. He reported for duty on board the "Quaker City" in May, and served with the vessel as medical officer for four months, at the end of which time her charter expired and she was permanently attached to the Navy, having been purchased by the Government of the United States. Dr. Dalton then returned to New York, awaiting further orders.

On the first of November he was commissioned by the State of New York as Surgeon to the 36th Regiment of New York Volunteers, then in the service of the United States at Camp Brightwood, near Washington, and at once joined his regiment, under orders from Headquarters of the Army of the Potomac.

During the winter of 1861-62, the troops remained in camp about the city of Washington, occupied for the most part in completing their organization and in practicing the routine military duties of a stationary force. This continued until the 10th of March, 1862, when the entire army, under General McClellan, moved into Virginia toward Manassas Junction, and finding that post abandoned by the enemy, returned to the Potomac river and encamped in the neighborhood of Alexandria. From this point was commenced the transfer of the army to Fortress Monroe, for the Peninsular Campaign. At that time

the organization by corps had been effected. Dr. Dalton's regiment was in the Third Brigade of General Couch's Division, and formed part of the Fourth Army Corps, commanded by Major General Keyes.

The arrival of the troops at Fortress Monroe was completed during the last week in March, and on the fourth of April the army began to move up the Peninsula. It remained stationary, however, before Yorktown, for the following month, until the fortifications of that city were abandoned by the enemy; when the army resumed its movement up the Peninsula, and, with its base of supplies at White House, advanced to the line of the Chickahominy. The Fourth Corps was the first to pass this river, which it crossed on the 23rd of May. It continued its march on the south bank, forming the extreme left of the army; and a few days afterward occupied the positions of Seven Pines and Fair Oaks, within five or six miles of Richmond. Here were fought the battles of May 31st and June 1st, which, though not absolutely defeats for our army, yet arrested its advance, and placed it more or less distinctly on the defensive. During this time Dr. Dalton was constantly with his regiment, sharing in all the fatigues and hardships of the campaign.

For the next three weeks the army became infested with sickness. The river was swollen by frequent rains, and the wide and marshy bottom-lands, on each side the narrow channel, were alternately flooded and exposed under a summer temperature. The men were employed almost incessantly in making

intrenchments and in building bridges and trestle-work, often working for hours up to their waists in water. These causes soon produced their necessary effects, and the regimental and depot hospitals became filled with cases of febrile disease, many of which proved rapidly fatal, while the numbers of the sick and disabled were daily augmented. After a time Dr. Dalton's health also began to yield, under the influence of excessive professional labor and the unwholesome exhalations of the Chickahominy swamps. He continued, however, to attend to his duties until the last, when his strength completely failed, and he was prostrated by the same insidious form of malarial fever which had already made such havoc among both officers and men. On the 23rd of June, he was found by his friend, Dr. William H. Carmalt, of New York, in a tent near Seven Pines, emaciated and exhausted, without appetite, and so far under the influence of the fever that he was incapable of providing for his own wants, or even of appreciating his own dangerous condition. Dr. Carmalt had come to the Peninsula, with several other physicians, in charge of the hospital and supply steamboat "St. Mark," provided by the Sanitary Commission, and had proceeded to the army in order to afford any required assistance in respect to medical services or supplies. He at once urged Dr. Dalton to leave the camp, and as soon as the requisite authority for his removal could be obtained, had him transferred to the hospital ship at Yorktown, which afterward proceeded to Fortress Monroe.

It was undoubtedly to this accidental meeting,

and to Dr. Carmalt's prompt and friendly action, that Dr. Dalton owed his life; as he was then so far reduced that a longer exposure to the same evil influences would, in all probability, have placed him beyond the hope of recovery. At Fortress Monroe he was met by his father, who had been notified of his condition, and had come from Massachusetts to find him. Under his father's care he sailed for the North early in July, and at once returned to his home in Massachusetts.

As happened in many similar instances of malarial fever, the most threatening signs of physical prostration soon disappeared under the influence of a northern atmosphere and appropriate medical care. At the end of two or three weeks Dr. Dalton was evidently out of danger, but his subsequent recovery took place more slowly. From time to time his leave of absence was extended until he should become again able to engage in active service; and it was only in the latter part of August that he had regained strength sufficiently to resume his duties as regimental surgeon.

During this time the disastrous period of the seven days' battles on the Peninsula, and the retreat of our forces to the James River, had been followed by the defeat of General Pope in northern Virginia. The Peninsula had just been evacuated under the orders of the Government; and the Army of the Potomac, having come by transports to the neighborhood of Alexandria, was hastening with all speed to meet the victorious enemy in Maryland. Dr. Dalton arrived in Washington and reported to the Surgeon-General on the first of September; but such was

the confusion, from the rapid and continuous transit of different portions of the army, that it was difficult to learn the position of his own command. He obtained some information, however, at the convalescent camp at Alexandria, and on the following day succeeded in finding and joining his regiment, which at once proceeded on its way up the river and into Maryland. The regiment still belonged to General Couch's Division of the Fourth Corps, which formed at this time a portion of the left wing of the army. It was stationed at Poolesville, in the neighborhood of Conrad's Ferry, in anticipation of the battle of Antietam, which took place a few days afterward.

While Dr. Dalton was at this post a singularly vexatious incident occurred to him, which illustrated in a striking manner the loose and reckless style in which a portion of the War Department was at that time administered. On the tenth of September a copy of the newspaper, which reached the camp of his regiment, contained a published General Order of the War Department in which he, with several other officers, was dismissed the service of the United States for absence without leave. This was the first and only intimation which reached him from any quarter of such a charge being in existence against him, nor did he receive any other notification of his dismissal than the printed paragraph accidentally seen in a daily newspaper. So wanton an outrage naturally excited in his friends the liveliest indignation, and Dr. Dalton himself was at a loss to account for it, or to form any idea of the source from which it had originated. He immediately took steps

to repel the charge. He left the camp at Poolesville, on the same day, for Washington, with the approval of his Division Commander, to confer on the subject with the Surgeon General, and at the same time addressed to the Adjutant General of the Army the following official paper, which may fairly be considered, under the trying circumstances of the case, as a model of quiet and dignified remonstrance.

THIRTY-SIXTH REGIMENT, NEW YORK STATE VOLUNTEERS,
September 10, 1862.

L. THOMAS, *Adjutant General, U. S. Army.*

SIR:—I read in General Order No. 125, War Department, that I am dismissed the service of the United States, "for being absent without leave" from my command, while the army to which it belonged was "fighting the enemy in the field."

Confident that the charge thus brought against my character is utterly groundless, and being sustained in that opinion by my commanding officers, both regimental and general, I respectfully beg to submit to your consideration the following statement:

On the 23d of June last, while the Thirty-sixth Regiment, N. Y. S. V., was encamped at Seven Pines, Va., I became ill, and was sent to a floating U. S. hospital by the Brigade Surgeon, with the written approval of the Medical Director of the corps, and the regimental and brigade commanders.

I subsequently applied for leave of absence, and received the same on the 7th of July, for a period of twenty days, through the proper medical and military authorities at Fortress Monroe, near which the

hospital ship then lay. I then went to my home in Massachusetts.

On the 23d day of July I forwarded to the War Department from Boston, Mass., an application for an extension of my leave for a period of thirty days, accompanying the same with the proper medical certificate prescribed by the U. S. Army regulations, and signed by the Surgeon General of Massachusetts, Acting Assistant Surgeon U. S. Army.

On the 21st day of August I presented myself at New York to William J. Sloan, Surgeon U. S. Army and Medical Director. From him I received a certificate in due form to the necessity of a re-extension of my leave for a period of fifteen days. This I immediately forwarded to the War Department. Surgeon Sloan also informed me that the fact of my not having received any reply to my previous application was not peculiar, and that the proper medical certificate was sufficient authority upon which to remain absent. A few days subsequent to this I received from the War Department a printed copy of an order relative to volunteer officers absent on leave for more than sixty days in consequence of wounds or of disease contracted in the line of their duty, stating that such would be reported to the Adjutant General for discharge.

On the first of September, four days previous to the expiration of my leave, I reported in person to the Surgeon General U. S. Army, at Washington, and on the second to Colonel J. S. Belknap, commanding at Convalescent Camp, Alexandria, Va., and subsequently, on the same day, to Colonel William H. Browne, Thirty-sixth Regiment, N. Y. S. V.

I have in my possession the official papers attesting the truth of the above.

In view of the facts, I respectfully solicit an early consideration of my case at your hands, and, if I am entitled to it, public reparation for the disgrace which has been thrown upon my name.

Respectfully,

EDWARD B. DALTON.

It might be anticipated that the War Department would naturally be anxious, in such a case, to make the most abundant reparation to a faithful and injured officer for the undeserved annoyance and irritation to which he had been subjected. This, however, did not appear to enter into the calculations of the Administration. The only public amends made in regard to the affair was a formal revocation of the dismissal, published in General Orders, sixteen days later, of which Dr. Dalton received the following copy:

WAR DEPARTMENT,

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
WASHINGTON, September 26, 1862.

GENERAL ORDERS, NO. 143.

So much of "General Orders No. 125," as dismisses Surgeon Edward B. Dalton, Thirty-sixth New York Volunteers, is, by direction of the President, revoked.

By order of the Secretary of War,

(Signed) L. THOMAS,

Adjutant General.

Official.

E. D. TOWNSEND,

Assistant Adjutant General.

Of the eleven officers dismissed in General Orders No. 125, all but four were reinstated in the same manner as above, the charges against them being, no doubt, equally groundless.

Notwithstanding this vexatious occurrence, Dr. Dalton resumed his duties with his usual alacrity and devotion, and seldom referred to it subsequently in terms of complaint.

A day or two after the battle of Antietam, the enemy retired across the Potomac to the entrance of the Shenandoah Valley. The Union forces, after a delay of several weeks, in the latter part of October also crossed the river a short distance below Harper's Ferry. The two armies then commenced a parallel movement toward the south, with the Blue Ridge between them, until, on the 9th of November, the General Headquarters of our army were at Warrenton, near the sources of the Rappahannock river. At this point the command was transferred from General McClellan to General Burnside; and within ten days afterward the army had commenced and executed its rapid march, in a southeasterly direction, toward Falmouth and Fredericksburg, in order to carry out the new plan of campaign against Richmond, from Fredericksburg and Acquia Creek as a base of operations.

Then came the extraordinary and unfortunate misunderstanding by which the pontoon train, required for the prompt passage of the river at Falmouth, was not forwarded from Washington, and the consequent failure to secure possession of Fredericksburg and the southern bank. The troops accordingly remained in position about Falmouth until the battle of Frede-

ricksburg, December 13th. At that time the Army of the Potomac had been organized into three Grand Divisions. The Thirty-sixth Regiment N. Y. V. was now in the Second Brigade of the Third Division of the Sixth Corps, commanded by General W. H. Smith, and was included in the Left Grand Division of the Army, under Major General Franklin.

This portion of the army crossed the river just below the city of Fredericksburg, on the two days preceding the battle, December 11th and 12th, holding the bridge-heads at this point until the commencement of the action, when they were expected to produce a decisive impression upon the enemy's right. After the failure of the general assault, the army retained its position on the Fredericksburg side until the night of December 15th, when it was withdrawn, and returned to the camps about Falmouth. About the middle of the following January it went into winter quarters, and on the 26th of the same month General Burnside was superseded in command by General Hooker.

During this time Dr. Dalton's superiority as a medical officer had become quite apparent to those associated with him, and he was soon called to positions of greater responsibility. On the second of January, 1863, he was detailed by Major General Smith as Medical Inspector for the Sixth Corps, and immediately entered upon the duties of his new position. Soon afterward his military status was permanently changed from the position of regimental surgeon to that of "Surgeon, United States Volunteers."

At the commencement of the war each volunteer

regiment had been provided, so far as possible, with a surgeon and assistant surgeon definitely attached to the command like other regimental officers, and receiving their commissions in a similar manner from the authorities of the State to which the regiment belonged. At the same time a different grade of medical officers was instituted, with the title of "Brigade Surgeon," to assist in providing for the general administration of the medical affairs of troops in the field, as well as that of general and post hospitals. The brigade surgeons, thus created, were commissioned directly by the President of the United States, and could thus be assigned to general duties in such manner as the exigencies of the service might require.

After a time it became desirable to increase the number of medical officers of this class. The title of brigade surgeon was dropped, and that of "Surgeon and Assistant Surgeon, U. S. Volunteers" adopted in its stead. The old brigade surgeons became at once Surgeons, U. S. V.; and a medical board was convened for the examination of others who might desire appointment to the new grade. The law required that each successful candidate should first be commissioned as assistant surgeon; after which he might be promoted to the grade of surgeon in due time. It was intimated to some of the volunteer regimental surgeons, whose services had been found to be most valuable, that if they were willing to enter the new corps with the secondary rank of assistants, as required by law, an early opportunity of promotion to the full grade of surgeon would be afforded them. Dr. Dalton was among

the first who received this intimation. He accordingly resigned his commission as Surgeon of the Thirty-sixth Regiment, appeared before the Examining Medical Board at Washington on the 24th of February, and was appointed Assistant Surgeon March 11th, and Surgeon, U.S.V., March 26th, 1863. He was still retained on duty as Medical Inspector of the Sixth Corps, which was now under the command of Major General Sedgwick.

In the early part of this year he married Miss Sarah Horton Colburn, daughter of Warren Colburn, the mathematician. The marriage took place at Cambridge, Mass., February 7th; Dr. Dalton having arrived from Virginia the day previous. After an absence of twenty days he again returned to his post with the army of the Potomac.

The following summer and winter were spent by Dr. Dalton for the most part in administrative and hospital service at Fortress Monroe and the neighboring posts. In the latter part of March he was ordered from the Army of the Potomac to Fortress Monroe, then the Headquarters of the Military Department of Virginia, under the command of General Dix. The comparative quiet of the service at this point was broken for a short time only during the summer by General Dix's demonstration against Richmond. In the month of June the enemy left his position at Fredericksburg for the invasion of Maryland and Pennsylvania; and the Army of the Potomac moved in a corresponding direction, to confront the rebel forces on the field of Gettysburg. At the same time our troops in the Department of Virginia commenced a movement up

the Peninsula, from Fortress Monroe and Yorktown. The expedition occupied White House, June 25th, and on the first of July advanced toward the Chickahominy river, for the purpose of threatening Richmond and thus embarrassing the movements of General Lee in Pennsylvania and Maryland. The battle of Gettysburg was fought on the third of July, and ten days afterward General Lee retired into Virginia. Our forces, however, continued to occupy the upper part of the Peninsula for several weeks. During this period Dr. Dalton was Acting Medical Director of the Army of Virginia, on the staff of General Dix. He provided for the medical supplies of the expedition, and accompanied the troops to White House, the extreme base of operations, where he remained for a short time, until the withdrawal of our forces from that point.

For the next five or six weeks he was temporarily in charge of the Chesapeake General Hospital near Fortress Monroe. On the 14th of September he was relieved from this post and assigned as Chief Medical Officer to the Balfour General Hospital at Portsmouth, Virginia, a hospital which contained on the average rather more than two hundred sick and wounded. Here he remained during the following season, with ample opportunities for learning the details of providing and administering a stationary hospital, which he afterward developed with such remarkable success on a much larger scale. He enjoyed here also the comforts of a home and the society of his wife, who spent the greater part of the fall and winter in company with him at Fortress Monroe and Portsmouth. Early, however, in the

next year, he found that the climate of the locality, and the confinement and monotony of hospital life, were having a depressing effect upon his health and usefulness. Both his mental and bodily temperament required a more active employment; and he addressed to the Surgeon General's Office a request for assignment to duty in the field, as follows:

BALFOUR GENERAL HOSPITAL,
PORTSMOUTH, VIRGINIA, February 12th, 1864.

Col. JOSEPH K. BARNES, U. S. A.,

Acting Surgeon General, U. S. Army.

COLONEL: I have the honor to request that, if not inconsistent with your views, I may be relieved from duty as surgeon in charge of this hospital, and ordered to report at Headquarters of the Army of the Potomac. The confinement incident to hospital duty, especially in a climate where I have suffered severely from malarial disease, is seriously injuring my health, while active duty in the field has not done so.

Previous to my transfer to this Department, I served eighteen months in the Army of the Potomac, and I strongly desire to rejoin it.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

EDWARD B. DALTON,

Surgeon, U. S. V.

This request was readily granted; and in accordance with orders to that effect, Dr. Dalton left Portsmouth on the first of March, and a day or two afterward reported at Headquarters of the Army of the

Potomac, where he was at once assigned to duty as Medical Inspector. He was not at this time attached to any single corps, but acted as "Inspector for the Medical Department of the Army of the Potomac." He reported directly to the office of the Medical Director, Surgeon McParlin, from whom he received orders for the inspection of various portions of the army, and for "such services connected with the Medical Department, as might from time to time be required of him."

The army at this time, under the command of General Meade, lay upon the north bank of the Rapidan, where it had remained during the previous winter, with the enemy equally intrenched on the south bank of the same river. In the month of March, General Grant was appointed Lieutenant General, and assigned to the supreme military command of the armies of the United States. On the 17th he assumed command, making his headquarters in the field with the Army of the Potomac.

The great struggle of the summer of 1864 was now about to commence, by which the Army of the Potomac, again in close contact with its old adversary, was to force its way through Northern Virginia to a new position before Petersburg and Richmond. The month of April was spent in completing the necessary recruitment and preparation of the troops. On the Fourth of May the movement began. The army left its intrenchments on the Rapidan, penetrating the country immediately south of that river known as the "Wilderness," and moving by the left flank toward Spottsylvania Court House. Then came the series of obstinate and sanguinary encounters, begin-

ning with the battles of the Wilderness, May 5th and 6th, and continued almost without interruption by those of Spottsylvania Court House, the North Anna, Hanovertown, Cold Harbor, and the intervening points, until the appearance of the advanced corps of the army before Petersburg, and the attacks on the defences of that city, June 15th, 16th, 17th and 18th. During this period there were no less than ten actions deserving the name of battles; and out of forty-five days, twenty-seven had been days of more or less considerable fighting by various portions of the army. Never before, since the commencement of the war, had the positions on both sides been assailed with more determination or held with more tenacity; and the number of casualties, both in dead and wounded, was correspondingly large. At the same time, the army was almost constantly moving in such a manner as to require repeated changes in its base of supplies, and of course also in the direction in which its sick and wounded were to be transported. This latter duty was intrusted to the care of Dr. Dalton.

During the battles of the Wilderness he was with the army, occupied with the duties incident to his position on the general medical staff. Immediately afterward he was charged with the removal and care of all the wounded, by the following order:

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
MEDICAL DIRECTOR'S OFFICE,
May 7th, 1864.

Surgeon E. B. DALTON, U. S. V.,

Inspct. Medical Department, Army of the Potomac.

SIR—The instructions given you this morning are

so far modified that you will accompany the train of ambulances and wagons on its march with this army, and take general charge thereof as senior medical officer, and see that the wounded are well cared for and supplied in every particular so far as may be possible. You will keep me informed of their condition at all times. The necessities of the service fully require the best endeavors of the Medical Department to execute a most important and difficult duty.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

THOS. A. MCPARLIN,

Surgeon U. S. A., Medical Director.

On the following day, the city of Fredericksburg having been fixed upon as a base, Dr. Dalton was directed to establish at this point the first hospital depot. Here he collected and placed under shelter, by the ninth of May, over 7,000 wounded, converting the city into an organization of corps hospitals, and providing for all the immediate necessities of the medical service. This, however, was but the beginning of the work required. The wounded from the Wilderness continued to be brought in, and were followed at once by those from the battles of Spottsylvania Court House, May 10th, 12th and 18th. Every available means was called into requisition for the transportation, reception and care of so large a number of disabled and suffering men; and all the medical officers present, together with a large delegation of surgeons from civil life, who had volunteered their assistance for the emergency, were

abundantly occupied in performing the necessary labors. At least an equal amount of diligence was needed for the transhipment of many of the wounded, and their immediate transfer to Washington. For Fredericksburg, owing to the shifting position of the armies, could not be a permanent depot; and the wounded must not be allowed to accumulate in such a manner as to interfere with their safety, when the time for evacuation should arrive.

On the twenty-first the army commenced its movement from the neighborhood of Spottsylvania toward the North Anna; and the hospital trains, instead of being sent to Fredericksburg, were directed to Port Royal, twenty miles farther down the Rappahannock river. This point was used for a few days as the second depot and base of supplies. Soon afterward Dr. Dalton received instructions for further movements, in the following order from the Medical Director of the Army:

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
Camp at Mango Hick, near Junction of North and South Anna, Va.;
MEDICAL DIRECTOR'S OFFICE,
May 27, 1864, 4.15 P. M.

SIR—This army, by its advance, has ceased to be within reach or convenient use of Port Royal as a depot for wounded to be sent to Washington, or as a point from which to draw medical and hospital supplies. I desire that the transport vessels and medical purveying and supply vessels, be immediately ordered to proceed to White House, on the Pamunkey river, and that the field hospital encampment equipage, and officers serving at Port Royal, be transferred immediately to that point.

The last trains of wounded left this army for Port Royal May 27th; and no more wounded will be sent to, or waited for, at Port Royal after their arrival.

I am, Sir, with much respect,

Your obedient servant,

THOS. A. MCPARLIN,

Surgeon U. S. A., Medical Director.

Surgeon E. B. DALTON, U. S. Vols.,

Chief Medical Officer,

Fredericksburg.

Both Port Royal and the city of Fredericksburg were accordingly abandoned at the same time that the army crossed the Pamunkey river, May 28th; the wounded being all sent to Washington, and the medical supplies moved to White House, where the third depot was established, and the wounded again received from the army. A similar process of temporary hospital organization, treatment, and transhipment of wounded, continued here for two weeks, followed by another evacuation, and the transportation of stores and hospital material, round the Peninsula to City Point, the new base of operations reached by the army, on the south bank of the James river. All these movements were conducted under Dr. Dalton's immediate direction, and were accomplished so successfully, that none of the wounded were left behind at either point, nor any of the hospital property abandoned; and the new hospital depot was established at City Point, almost simultaneously with its occupation by the Army of the Potomac.

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HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
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MEDICAL DIRECTOR'S OFFICE,
May 27, 1864, 4.15 P.M.

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At the same time, a number of surgeons from civil life arrived and reported for duty, in accordance with orders from the Surgeon General's office. Many of these rendered most valuable assistance.

Immediately upon the establishment of communication with Washington, measures were taken to transfer to that city all such men as were disabled for more than thirty days. All the available transportation was used for the more severe cases, while many wounded only in the upper extremity were sent in squads on foot to Belle Plain, under charge of a medical officer, and there placed on board transports.

Meantime the battles of Spottsylvania sent in daily accessions to the number in the city. In some instances the ambulance and wagon trains conveying these were unloaded at once; while in others they were halted for a sufficient length of time to allow for the immediate wants of those on board, and were then sent on at once to Belle Plain.

It having now become evident that the main operations for a considerable time would take place before Petersburg, with City Point as a base, it was determined to retain the hospital accommodations at that point, and to develop them on a plan commensurate with the requirements of the entire army. This was accordingly done, under the personal direction of Dr. Dalton, who remained in charge as Chief Medical Officer; the organization itself receiving the name of the "Depot Field Hospital of the Army of the Potomac." It was made capable of accommodating 10,000 patients, and nearly that number were often under treatment at the same time. By the month of October all its principal features were fully developed. The details of the entire operation of this department, from its commencement after the battles of the Wilderness, are best given in the following report made by Dr. Dalton in December, 1864, at the desire of the Medical Director:

DEPOT FIELD HOSPITAL, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
CITY POINT, VA., December, 1864.

Brevet Lieut. Col. THOS. A. MCPARLIN, U. S. A.,
Medical Director of the Army of the Potomac:

SIR—I have the honor to submit the following report upon the origin and development of the Depot Field Hospital of the Army of the Potomac, from May to October of the present year:

On the 7th of May, 1864, it was ordered from the Headquarters of the Army of the Potomac, that all the wounded from the battle-fields of the Wilderness should be taken across the Rapidan, via Ely's Ford,

to Rappahannock Station on the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, and thence sent by rail to Washington; and I was ordered to take general charge of their transportation.

Owing to the constant and heavy demand for ambulances at the immediate front, a large number of army wagons were furnished by the Quartermaster's Department, to assist in the execution of this order. The amount of transportation, however, was still quite insufficient, and a large number of wounded were left at the various field depots, under the care of a few medical officers and attendants, provided with such shelter, supplies, and rations, as the emergency allowed. The train was at once gotten in readiness, loaded with wounded, and furnished with the requisite amount of rations and medical supplies. A few medical officers were detailed from each corps for the care of the wounded during the trip.

The train was fairly under way when the enemy's cavalry was reported in the vicinity of Ely's Ford. An order was received to proceed no farther in that direction, but to turn back and follow in the rear of the army. This order was at once carried into effect, and the train followed the line of march during the night.

The following day, May 8th, I received an order to conduct the train to Fredericksburg, Va., and there place the wounded in temporary hospital accommodations, until they could be removed to Washington. A suitable escort was provided, and the train proceeded as ordered, entering Fredericksburg about one o'clock on the morning of the ninth.

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The churches, public buildings, warehouses, mills, and the more commodious of the private dwellings were at once taken possession of for hospital purposes, and a large number of wounded officers and men were billeted upon such families as remained in town. Over 7,000 wounded, the whole number brought on the train, were thus placed under shelter. The number of medical officers and attendants was, of necessity, disproportionately small. Some forty medical officers were present. These worked most faithfully and steadily day and night. The immediate necessities of the wounded were attended to with very little delay, and the less pressing demands met with all possible dispatch.

The absolute impossibility of preparing accurate records under these circumstances, makes it impossible now to furnish more than a report of the general conduct of affairs. Every effort was made to systematize as rapidly as possible. The organization adopted was by corps, corresponding to the organization of the army. Certain buildings, with the adjacent district of the town, were assigned to each corps hospital, and the men belonging to the same collected, so far as practicable, within the limits of this district. From the medical officers present of each corps, one was selected as surgeon in charge, and the remainder were assigned to duty as assistants. This same organization, with some modification in the details, has continued up to the present time.

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On the 20th three hundred hospital tents arrived. These were distributed to the different corps hospitals, and were at once pitched outside the town. So many of the wounded as could be accommodated were transferred from the buildings without delay.

On the 22d the repairs of the Falmouth and Acquia Creek railway were completed, and this additional means constantly made use of for the removal of the wounded to Acquia Landing, to which point the depots, previously at Belle Plain, had been transferred.

Simultaneously with the opening of the railroad, light draught steamers reached the city by the Rappahannock river. These were hastily furnished with supplies, straw, etc., and used for the transportation of wounded to Tappahannock, and other points lower down the river, where hospital transports were ready to receive and convey them to Washington.

The army had now moved so far that Fredericksburg was no longer eligible as a hospital depot, and every effort was made to evacuate the town as promptly as possible. By the morning of Saturday, the 28th of May, the wounded were all removed, and all public property placed on board steamers and barges in tow. These dropped down the river under convoy of a gunboat, while the ambulances and army wagons moved overland, under escort of the troops which had been garrisoning the city during the occupation. By night both reached Port Royal, which had already been occupied as a depot, but was about to be abandoned in consequence of the onward march of the army toward the Peninsula. Some thousand wounded had been brought here

from the front by Surgeon A. J. Phelps, U. S. V., and by him sent thence to Washington. No more were expected; and White House, on the Pamunkey river, had been designated as the next base. The necessary arrangements for transportation to said point were made without delay, and the medical officers, with their hospital attendants and property, sailed on the afternoon of the following day. Surgeon W. L. Faxon, Thirty-second Mass. Vols., in charge of the Fifth Corps Hospital, remained in charge at Port Royal until the departure of the last boat, to see that nothing appertaining to the department should be neglected. After thoroughly performing this duty, he accompanied the troops and train across land to the new base.

We reached White House on the 30th, and immediately commenced unloading and pitching the tents, and preparing for the reception of wounded, whose arrival from the battle fields of Hanovertown and Cold Harbor was now looked for every hour. The hospitals were arranged along the river bank, in double echelon, extending from the former site of the White House some three fourths of a mile down the river, with a breadth of half a mile. Shelter, supplies, and facilities for cooking were in readiness when the first train reached the landing on the afternoon of the 1st of June.

Captain Pitkin, A. Q. M., Depot Quartermaster, spared no effort in affording every facility for the prompt accommodation and comfortable transportation of these men. It being understood that this base was but temporary, every available steamer bound thence to Washington was immediately

provided with straw, rations, medical supplies and cooking apparatus, and loaded with wounded. These were sent under charge of medical officers detailed to this duty, by virtue of the pressing emergency and the absolute impossibility of communicating with headquarters for orders. Thus thousands found immediate accommodation upon the boats without even the delay of registering their names; sufficient examination being given on the spot to prevent the escape of malingerers or deserters.

From the 1st of June to the 13th there were daily and sometimes hourly arrivals of trains from the front, the number thus received being sufficient to keep the hospitals full in spite of every effort to relieve them.

On the thirteenth, however, the arrivals ceased. Information was received that the army was moving by the left flank to the James River, and twenty-four hours sufficed to send away a large proportion of the remaining wounded, strike the tents, and repack and ship a good portion of the property. At this juncture, Captain J. E. Jones, A.Q.M., and Captain B. F. Talbot, C. S., reported for duty with the Hospital Department. The latter at once provided abundant subsistence stores, issued a sufficient quantity for those who must still remain a day or two, and shipped the remainder, to be taken with the first medical boat for the new base. Assistant Surgeon A. K. St. Clair, First Michigan Cavalry, was detailed to remain in charge at the landing, whence he successfully removed the remaining wounded and the stores.

On the morning of the fourteenth a large proportion of the medical officers, the Commissary and the

Quartermaster, together with the Purveying Department and most of the hospital property, started down the Pamunkey, *en route* for Jamestown Island in the James River, which had been designated in your letter of June 12th, as the probable rendezvous until further orders. A temporary delay was occasioned at Yorktown by the great reluctance of the captains of the purveying steamers "Planter," "Farmer," and "Hugh Jenkins," to proceed. Their objections were however overruled, and we reached Jamestown Island on the afternoon of the fifteenth. Here, orders were received through you, to proceed to City Point and there establish the hospital depot.

On the sixteenth, on reaching the pontoon bridge near Fort Powhatan, we were delayed by the crossing of cavalry and the cattle. Surgeon Phelps, however, succeeded in getting above the bridge by means of a small boat, and thence by tug to City Point, where he located a site for the hospital.

We finally reached our destination at City Point on the eighteenth, just as a train of ambulances arrived, loaded with wounded from the assault upon Petersburg. These were at once attended to, and transportation to Washington provided for them, hospital transports being loaned for the purpose by Surgeon McCormick, U. S. A., Medical Director of the Department of Virginia and North Carolina.

The hospital property was at once unloaded and conveyed to the site selected, and there put in readiness as rapidly as possible for the reception of wounded, who still continued to come in in large numbers. The site, which is the one still occupied, is located to the south of the James River, one mile

abundantly occupied in performing the necessary labors. At least an equal amount of diligence was needed for the transhipment of many of the wounded, and their immediate transfer to Washington. For Fredericksburg, owing to the shifting position of the armies, could not be a permanent depot; and the wounded must not be allowed to accumulate in such a manner as to interfere with their safety, when the time for evacuation should arrive.

On the twenty-first the army commenced its movement from the neighborhood of Spottsylvania toward the North Anna; and the hospital trains, instead of being sent to Fredericksburg, were directed to Port Royal, twenty miles farther down the Rappahannock river. This point was used for a few days as the second depot and base of supplies. Soon afterward Dr. Dalton received instructions for further movements, in the following order from the Medical Director of the Army:

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
Camp at Mango Hick, near Junction of North and South Anna, Va.;
MEDICAL DIRECTOR'S OFFICE,
May 27, 1864, 4.15 P. M.

SIR—This army, by its advance, has ceased to be within reach or convenient use of Port Royal as a depot for wounded to be sent to Washington, or as a point from which to draw medical and hospital supplies. I desire that the transport vessels and medical purveying and supply vessels, be immediately ordered to proceed to White House, on the Pamunkey river, and that the field hospital encampment equipage, and officers serving at Port Royal, be transferred immediately to that point.

The last trains of wounded left this army for Port Royal May 27th; and no more wounded will be sent to, or waited for, at Port Royal after their arrival.

I am, Sir, with much respect,

Your obedient servant,

THOS. A. MCPARLIN,

Surgeon U. S. A., Medical Director.

Surgeon E. B. DALTON, U. S. Vols.,

Chief Medical Officer,

Fredericksburg.

Both Port Royal and the city of Fredericksburg were accordingly abandoned at the same time that the army crossed the Pamunkey river, May 28th; the wounded being all sent to Washington, and the medical supplies moved to White House, where the third depot was established, and the wounded again received from the army. A similar process of temporary hospital organization, treatment, and transhipment of wounded, continued here for two weeks, followed by another evacuation, and the transportation of stores and hospital material, round the Peninsula to City Point, the new base of operations reached by the army, on the south bank of the James river. All these movements were conducted under Dr. Dalton's immediate direction, and were accomplished so successfully, that none of the wounded were left behind at either point, nor any of the hospital property abandoned; and the new hospital depot was established at City Point, almost simultaneously with its occupation by the Army of the Potomac.

It having now become evident that the main operations for a considerable time would take place before Petersburg, with City Point as a base, it was determined to retain the hospital accommodations at that point, and to develop them on a plan commensurate with the requirements of the entire army. This was accordingly done, under the personal direction of Dr. Dalton, who remained in charge as Chief Medical Officer; the organization itself receiving the name of the "Depot Field Hospital of the Army of the Potomac." It was made capable of accommodating 10,000 patients, and nearly that number were often under treatment at the same time. By the month of October all its principal features were fully developed. The details of the entire operation of this department, from its commencement after the battles of the Wilderness, are best given in the following report made by Dr. Dalton in December, 1864, at the desire of the Medical Director:

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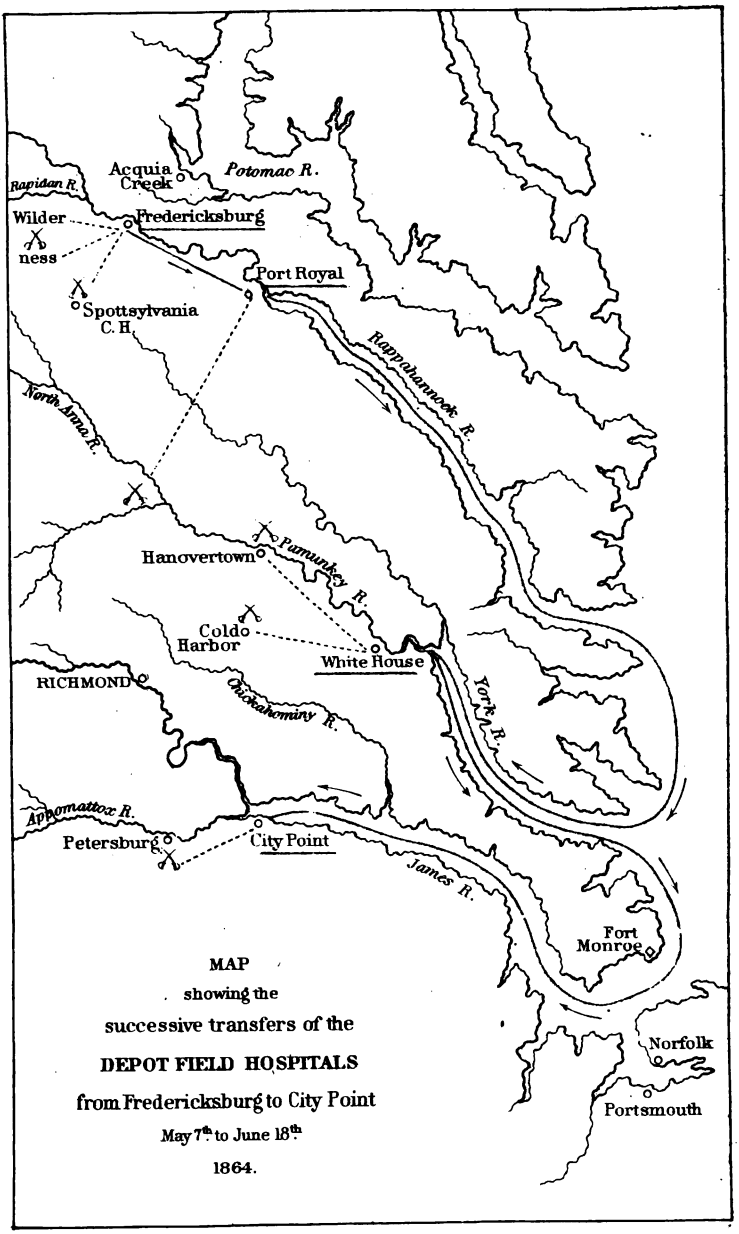
Acquia Creek
Potomac R.
Rapidan R.
Wilder ness
Fredericksburg
Port Royal
Spottsylvania C. H.
Rappahannock R.
North Anna R.
Hanovertown
Pamunkey R.
Coldo Harbor
White House
RICHMOND
Chickahominy R.
York R.
Appomattox R.
Petersburg
City Point
James R.
Fort Monroe
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MAP
showing the
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corps; and at the time of General Lee's surrender, on the 9th of April, it occupied the line of the Lynchburg railroad.

Dr. Dalton, who was with the corps throughout, reached Burkesville, a station about fifty miles west of Petersburg, on the 7th, and at once established the corps hospitals at that point. Here he had not only charge of the sick and wounded of his own corps, but also received and provided for all those coming from the front and *en route* for City Point; to whom were now added the still larger numbers of disabled rebel prisoners passing in the same direction. For the successful management of the affairs of his department, both at the time of the assault on Petersburg and subsequently, he received special commendation in the Reports of both the Medical Inspector and Medical Director of the Army. He continued to be engaged in these duties until the 19th, when the corps moved for City Point and embarked for Washington. On their arrival he was assigned as Chief Medical Officer at the depot hospital at Alexandria.

The war was now practically over, and Dr. Dalton was one of the first of the volunteer officers to retire from military life and resume the occupations of peace. He tendered his resignation to the Adjutant General on the 24th of April, 1865, for the reason "that, as the necessity for volunteer medical officers in the army was no longer pressing, he wished to turn his attention to private business." His tender of resignation was approved by the Surgeon General, with the indorsement that "Surgeon Dalton's entire service has been marked

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It having now become evident that the main operations for a considerable time would take place before Petersburg, with City Point as a base, it was determined to retain the hospital accommodations at that point, and to develop them on a plan commensurate with the requirements of the entire army. This was accordingly done, under the personal direction of Dr. Dalton, who remained in charge as Chief Medical Officer; the organization itself receiving the name of the "Depot Field Hospital of the Army of the Potomac." It was made capable of accommodating 10,000 patients, and nearly that number were often under treatment at the same time. By the month of October all its principal features were fully developed. The details of the entire operation of this department, from its commencement after the battles of the Wilderness, are best given in the following report made by Dr. Dalton in December, 1864, at the desire of the Medical Director:

DEPOT FIELD HOSPITAL, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
CITY POINT, VA., December, 1864.

Brevet Lieut. Col. THOS. A. MCPARLIN, U. S. A.,
Medical Director of the Army of the Potomac:

SIR—I have the honor to submit the following report upon the origin and development of the Depot Field Hospital of the Army of the Potomac, from May to October of the present year:

On the 7th of May, 1864, it was ordered from the Headquarters of the Army of the Potomac, that all the wounded from the battle-fields of the Wilderness should be taken across the Rapidan, via Ely's Ford,

But his physical condition proved to be such that he could not bear the climate of the Atlantic coast. The cough had never entirely left him since his first attack; and, notwithstanding every precaution, he was liable to the recurrence or exaggeration of symptoms which could not exist without danger. During the summer of 1871, these symptoms increased to such an extent, that it became evident both to himself and his friends, that he could not remain where he was with the slightest prospect of recovery. He took the determination to abandon, temporarily, his professional business, and to try for some years, the climate of California; trusting to an out-door life in that milder region to reinstate himself thoroughly in a condition of efficiency and health. He started, accordingly, for California in the month of October, in company with his friend and companion of many years, Dr. Foster Swift, who was going, with his family, in the same direction.

During all this time nothing could exceed the fortitude and cheerfulness with which he bore the succession of his trials, disappointments, and suffering. Of all the admirable qualities that belonged to his nature, none commanded the respect and sympathy of his friends more than this. With his family, his business, and his health destroyed, with a new home and new prospects just established and again abandoned under the same imperious necessity, he was now turning his face to the Pacific coast with the deliberate intention, as the best result, of living there for several years, with a new occupation, new acquaintances, and new interests, to be separated from his former home by the breadth of the con-

to Rappahannock Station on the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, and thence sent by rail to Washington; and I was ordered to take general charge of their transportation.

Owing to the constant and heavy demand for ambulances at the immediate front, a large number of army wagons were furnished by the Quartermaster's Department, to assist in the execution of this order. The amount of transportation, however, was still quite insufficient, and a large number of wounded were left at the various field depots, under the care of a few medical officers and attendants, provided with such shelter, supplies, and rations, as the emergency allowed. The train was at once gotten in readiness, loaded with wounded, and furnished with the requisite amount of rations and medical supplies. A few medical officers were detailed from each corps for the care of the wounded during the trip.

The train was fairly under way when the enemy's cavalry was reported in the vicinity of Ely's Ford. An order was received to proceed no farther in that direction, but to turn back and follow in the rear of the army. This order was at once carried into effect, and the train followed the line of march during the night.

The following day, May 8th, I received an order to conduct the train to Fredericksburg, Va., and there place the wounded in temporary hospital accommodations, until they could be removed to Washington. A suitable escort was provided, and the train proceeded as ordered, entering Fredericksburg about one o'clock on the morning of the ninth.

The churches, public buildings, warehouses, mills, and the more commodious of the private dwellings were at once taken possession of for hospital purposes, and a large number of wounded officers and men were billeted upon such families as remained in town. Over 7,000 wounded, the whole number brought on the train, were thus placed under shelter. The number of medical officers and attendants was, of necessity, disproportionately small. Some forty medical officers were present. These worked most faithfully and steadily day and night. The immediate necessities of the wounded were attended to with very little delay, and the less pressing demands met with all possible dispatch.

The absolute impossibility of preparing accurate records under these circumstances, makes it impossible now to furnish more than a report of the general conduct of affairs. Every effort was made to systematize as rapidly as possible. The organization adopted was by corps, corresponding to the organization of the army. Certain buildings, with the adjacent district of the town, were assigned to each corps hospital, and the men belonging to the same collected, so far as practicable, within the limits of this district. From the medical officers present of each corps, one was selected as surgeon in charge, and the remainder were assigned to duty as assistants. This same organization, with some modification in the details, has continued up to the present time.

The day after the occupation of the city, and for several days subsequently, trains of ambulances, containing supplies, were sent with flag-of-truce under charge of a medical officer to the Wilderness, for

the purpose of completing the removal of the wounded. All, save a few taken by the enemy, were thus brought into town.

Owing to the fact that this occupation of Fredericksburg, as a hospital, was entirely unexpected, a day or two intervened between the arrival of the wounded and the establishment of communication with Washington; during which time the supply of medical and hospital stores, surgical appliances, et cetera, was quite limited. Ships, laden with everything necessary, reached Belle Plain on the 10th of May, and wagon trains at once brought an abundance to the city.

At the same time, a number of surgeons from civil life arrived and reported for duty, in accordance with orders from the Surgeon General's office. Many of these rendered most valuable assistance.

Immediately upon the establishment of communication with Washington, measures were taken to transfer to that city all such men as were disabled for more than thirty days. All the available transportation was used for the more severe cases, while many wounded only in the upper extremity were sent in squads on foot to Belle Plain, under charge of a medical officer, and there placed on board transports.

Meantime the battles of Spottsylvania sent in daily accessions to the number in the city. In some instances the ambulance and wagon trains conveying these were unloaded at once; while in others they were halted for a sufficient length of time to allow for the immediate wants of those on board, and were then sent on at once to Belle Plain.

On the 20th three hundred hospital tents arrived. These were distributed to the different corps hospitals, and were at once pitched outside the town. So many of the wounded as could be accommodated were transferred from the buildings without delay.

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